

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 211535Z OCT 75

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2681

S E C R E T JIDDA 7078

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE TO USMTM DHAHRAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA

SUBJECT: DISCREPANCIES IN SAUDI ARMS DELIVERY SCHEDULES

REF: A. STATE 245094

B. JIDDA 6512

SUMMARY: BEFORE WE TAKE UP MATTERS OUTLINED IN REF A WITH MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN AND GIVE HIM THE WELCOME NEW CONCERNING DRAGON, VULCAN AND 155 HOWITZERS, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT WIDE DISCREPANCIES IN WEAPONS DELIVERY SCHEDULES BE RESOLVED. THE VARIANCES IN DELIVERY TIMES ARE LIKELY TO BE SEEN BY SAG AS EVIDENCE THAT THE USG IS NOT RPT NOT KEEPING ITS WORD AND COULD SEVERELY DAMAGE U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS ACROSS THE BOARD. AT ISSUE, AS WE SEE IT, ARE DIFFERENCES IN WHAT SECRETARY KISSINGER SAID TO CROWN PRINCE FAHD DURING HIS TALKS ON 2 SEPTEMBER 1975 IN TAIF AND DEPARTMENT'S IMPRESSION OF WHAT SECRETARY SAID. THE SAUDI VIEW IS THAT KISSINGER'S STATEMENTS OF 2 SEPTEMBER WERE USG POSITION AND PROMISE TO PERFORM. END SUMMARY.

1. FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S LETTER OF 22 SEPTEMBER 1975 TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ELLSWORTH (ISA) AND REF A WE NOTE WIDE DISCREPANCIES IN DELIVERY SCHEDULES FOR URGENT SAUDI ARMS REQUIREMENTS THAT ARE LIKELY TO HAVE DAMAGING EFFECT ON U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS IF THERE IS

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ANY LENGTHENING OF DELIVERY TIME. SOME OF THE SPECIFIC

DISCREPANCIES ARE:

(1) ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS:

A. ATHERTON LETTER SAYS "464 TO BE PROVIDED, WITH DELIVERIES PROGRAMMED TO BEGIN IN JUNE 1977 (AS OUTLINED IN THE ENCLOSED PAPER); THE REMAINING 430 TO BE PROVIDED, WITH DELIVERY TIMES TO BE DISCUSSED WITH SAG".

B. SECRETARY KISSINGER TOLD CROWN PRINCE FAHD 2 SEPTEMBER THAT WE HAVE APPROVED THE FULL 894 APC'S ORDERED BY SAUDI ARABIA AND WILL ENSURE DELIVERY WITHIN A TWO-YEAR PERIOD. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE EARLIER DELIVERY TIMES FOR THESE APC'S WAS BETWEEN FIVE AND SIX YEARS.

C. REF A CLARIFIES DIFFERENCES OVER NUMBERS BUT DOES NOT RPT NOT SOLVE TIME DIFFERENCES.

(2) M-60 A1 TANKS WITH 105MM CANNON:

A. ATHERTON LETTER SAYS "150 TO BE PROVIDED WITH DELIVERIES PROGRAMMED TO BEGIN IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1978 (AS OUTLINED IN THE ENCLOSED PAPER)".

B. SECRETARY TOLD FAHD TAHT WE WILL APPROVE A SALE OF 150 OF THE TANKS WITHIN A TWO-YEAR PERIOD. HE NOTED THAT THE EARLIER HEAD TIME QUOTED FOR THESE TANKS WAS SIX YEARS.

C. REF A MAKES NO MENTION OF M-60 A1 TANKS.

(3) TOW MISSILES:

A. ATHERTON LETTER AND PARA 6 REF A SAY THE REMAINING 102 LAUNCHERS AND 2540 MISSILES WITH DELIVERIES TO BEGIN IN "DECEMBER 1976".

B. SECRETARY TOLD FAHD THAT AMBASSADOR AKINS HAD TOLD PRINCE SULTAN IN MID-JULY THAT WE WOULD APPROVE THE SALE OF 50 LAUNCHERS AND 500 MISSILES TO BE DELIVERED BEFORE  
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THE END OF THIS YEAR AND THAT WE ARE NOW ALSO PREPARED TO SELL TO SAUDI ARABIA 16 MISSILES LAUNCHERS AND 50 TO 150 MISSILES EACH MONTH STARTING IN JANUARY 1976, UNTIL THE TOTAL SAUDI REQUEST OF 152 LAUNCHERS AND 3,000 MISSILES IS REACHED. HE SAID THAT THE DELIVERIES WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 1976.

SAG HAD TWO NOTETAKERS PRESENT AT 2 SEPTEMBER TAIF MEETING,

WHOSE ENGLISH IS EXCELLENT. SAUDI RECORD ALSO MATCHES  
EMBASSY RECOLLECTION OF WHAT SECRETARY TOLD CORWN PRINCE  
FAHD.

2. THE ISSUE OF USG RESOLVE TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS TO  
SAG ARMED FORCES MODERNIZATION PROGRAM GOES TO THE HEART OF  
THE U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONSHIP. EVEN SECRETARY KISSINGER'S  
STATED DELIVERY SCHEDULES WERE VIEWED AS TOO SLOW BY MINDEF  
PRINCE SULTAN WHO ASKED LEAD TIMES BE SHORTENED TO ONE YEAR  
IN ALL CASES (REF B). WE ARE CONCERNED THAT IF WE HAVE TO  
INFORM MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN THAT USG IS NOT NOW PREPARED  
TO MEET THE DELIVERY SCHEDULES HE IS CONVINCED THE SECRETARY  
PROMISED THAT HE WILL BE PERSONALLY EMBARRASSED AND MAY REACT  
ANGRILY. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT SULTAN IS ALREADY  
IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION OVER PUBLICITY OVER AGENTS  
FEES, NORTHROP, LOCKHEED, ETC. AND LONGER-THAN-PROMISED  
DELIVERY TIMES WILL COMPOUND THESE DIFFICULTIES TO DETRIMENT  
OF U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS. WE URGE IMMEDIATE CLARIFICATION  
OF THESE DIFFERENCES BEFORE SUBJECT OF JOINT COMMISSION  
MEETING IS RAISED WITH MODA.

3. WE WILL ADDRESS SEPARATELY OTHER POINTS REF A.  
AKINS

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED USMTM DHAHRAN.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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